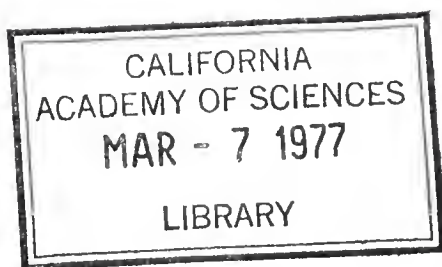


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the gull

Volume 59

Berkeley, Calif.

March 1977

Number 3

Australia in March

Our speaker for the March membership meeting will be Paul Covel, long-time GGAS member. He will be giving a program on his recent trip to Australia. The meeting is at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 17, at the First Unitarian Church, Franklin and Geary Streets, San Francisco.

GGAS Wants a House

The Board of Directors has authorized a committee to examine the possibility of acquiring a house for use as an office and center for our society. Any benevolent person interested in donating or selling us a house inexpensively (tax deductible) is passionately encouraged to call the office at 843-2222.

Audubon Wildlife Film Series

The fifth and last film of the 1976-77 series will be presented on Tuesday, March 8, at 7:30 p.m. in the Oakland Auditorium Theater at Tenth and Fallon Streets.

"In the Domain of the Leopard", Robert Rydjord has filmed the birds and the large animals of Equatorial East Africa, which he calls "an evolutionary masterpiece from an ecological and aesthetic point of view." The film is an immersion into the spirit of Africa and the inter-relationship between the wildlife and the land.

Tickets: adult \$2.00, student (under 18) \$1.50, children under 12 free if accompanied by a parent.

—DANNE JONES, *Coordinator* (654-1286)

Vi Homem

We note with great sadness the death of Vi Homem on January 23. Vi, who belonged to many organizations, held a special place for GGAS as we did for her. She gave generously of her time and talents as assistant editor, then editor of *The Gull*, compiler of the Bird Observations column, field trips leader, and our first librarian.

Most of all Vi gave friendship. Ever eager to answer any and all questions, always ready to welcome newcomers and put them at ease. She set an example for all to follow. Just a few Sundays ago we found ourselves going up to some new birders, introducing ourselves and asking if we could be of any assistance; all because a few years ago a smiling lady had approached two very green novices, extended her hand and said "Hi, I'm Vi Homem." Thus began for us, as it must have for hundreds of other people, a warm and lasting friendship. Vi will not soon be forgotten.

—LENORE JOHNSEN



Conservation Notes

There was an error in this column in the January *Gull*. The address of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge's manager is 3849 Peralta Blvd., not 3489. Our apologies to all who were inconvenienced by this.

The City of Berkeley is beginning the planning phase for the Berkeley bayfront lands. The future of much of the open space around the Berkeley Marina lies in question. An approximate schedule of what will happen is as follows: public input will be received until September of this year, Council approval of a plan is expected by the end of the year, followed by a design phase in 1978 and the beginning of construction sometime in 1979. We hope to have city planner John Torrey at one of our general membership meetings to present alternatives and to hear the views of GGAS members. It is our hope that the exciting undeveloped bayfront land from the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza to Golden Gate Fields will ultimately be set aside as unstructured open space.

If you are interested in taking an active part in the Conservation Committee, call David Littlejohn at 526-2572 (evenings) or leave a message at the GGAS office. We are always looking for new members who are willing to help out.

—CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Learn Birding at Albany,

Joe Morlan's popular Thursday morning bird walks will be continued this spring under the joint sponsorship of GGAS and the Albany Adult School. Register at the first class at 8:00 a.m. on March 31 in room 9, MacGregor School, 601 San Gabriel Avenue, Albany. The class consists of eleven three-hour sessions on Thursday mornings, and it is suitable for intermediate students. Emphasis will be on spring migration and bird song identification. For more information call the school at 526-6441.

...Alameda,

This spring quarter we are sponsoring a beginning birding class, Field Ornithology I, at Alameda Adult School. The class assumes no previous birding experience, and is designed to acquaint the beginner with the identification and attributes of the common birds in the Bay Area. The instructor is Don Roberson, widely-recognized California birder and editor of our Observations column. The class will meet for 11 weeks on Wednesday evenings beginning March 24 and will include field trips on alternate Saturdays or Sundays. A \$5 tuition fee allows one to take as many classes as desired at the Alameda Adult school. For further information call 522-6710 or 522-6771.

...or Oakland

Taking advantage of spring migration and concentrating on bird songs and behavior, George Peyton will teach a field course in advanced birding on five Saturday mornings starting on March 19, with a break for Easter week. Further information may be obtained by writing the Natural Sciences Department, Oakland Museum, 1000 Oak Street, Oakland, California 94607, or calling 273-3884.



Cohleach Prints For Sale

We have a limited number of prints of Guy Cohleach's beautiful painting of the Red-shafted Flicker available at the GGAS office. They are 16 by 20 inches and priced at \$40. The office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., but it is best to call ahead (843-2222) if you plan to come in.

January Observations

Northern California's long drought continued through January, but many of the month's better birds occurred where there still is water: the ocean. Most of the numerous boat trips turned up some good species. The most fortunate birders (not I, alas!) were in Monterey Bay 8-9 Jan where the Big White One, otherwise known as the **Laysan Albatross**, came dabbling around the boat. Monterey Bay also held **Flesh-footed Shearwaters** on 8 & 23 Jan, three **Manx Shearwaters** on 28 Dec and singles on 9 & 23 Jan, and an unseasonal **Buller's (New Zealand) Shearwater** 9 Jan. Small numbers of **Short-tailed Shearwaters** are now expected off our coast in winter; up to three were in Monterey Bay 8-9 Jan, one was seen from Bodega Head 8 Jan, and two or three were off Bodega Bay 15 Jan. Incidentally, although field guides emphasize underwing color, the best mark on the Short-tail is the much shorter, slimmer bill when compared with the **Sooty**.

Numerous reports of **White-fronted Geese**, often in flocks, came from coastal locations where they are unusual. Two **Snow Geese**, also rare coastally, were at Abbott's Lagoon 22 Jan (NS). A male of the **Eurasian** race of Green-winged Teal ("Common Teal") was noted at Bolinas Lagoon 22-23 Jan (NS *et al.*). Male **Tufted Ducks** returned to Richardson Bay 12 Jan (PS *et al.*) and to Lake Merritt 22 Jan (HC *et al.*) and remained to this writing, so we know we are dealing with two birds. Apparently they disappeared through the Christmas Counts only to spite us. Two interesting apparent hybrid ducks were present this month: a **Ring-necked X scaup sp.** on Lake Merritt (HC, JM) and a controversial bird on Rodeo Lagoon. This male has external characteristics indicative of a **Ring-necked X Tufted Duck**, but considering the great distances separating those species' known breeding ranges, others feel a **Greater Scaup X Tufted Duck** cross (of which there are records) better explains it. What fun such birds engender! **Oldsquaws** are present in small numbers each year, but perhaps deserve a summary once a winter: up to seven in Princeton Harbor (JL, JM *et al.*) and at least three scattered around Monterey Bay (mob) throughout the month, two in Richardson Bay 23 Jan (PS, EM), one at the east end of the Richmond bridge 9-23 Jan (NB *et al.*), and another at Pt. Richmond 23 Jan (GMeC, E&RC *et al.*). The **Harlequin Duck** inside S.F. Bay at Brisbane was seen all month (LS *et al.*).

An immature **Broad-winged Hawk** was present in Monterey 27-31 Dec (DbR, MC, WR); there is a previous winter record from that area. Two **American Golden Plovers** frequented Half Moon Bay 27 Dec-23 Jan

(JL) and singles were at Año Nuevo 2 Jan (RS *et al.*) and Drakes Beach 19 Jan (JMa). By now there appears to be no excuse for not seeing the Pacific Grove **Ruff**, content on the beached kelp all month (mob). Incredible was an **Elegant Tern** at Princeton 19 Dec–8 Jan (PM, BH). Three **Xantus' Murrelets** in Monterey Bay 23 Jan (JM, TC) add to a few previous sightings of this unusual-in-winter alcid. **Glaucous Gulls** appeared widely: singles at San Gregorio SB on 28 Dec (TH), Monterey Bay and Crespi Pond 23 Jan (TC, JM, JLa), Palo Alto 29 Jan (SL *et al.*), and two settled in at the San Leandro dump 12-25 Jan (HCg, DE *et al.*). Better yet were **Franklin's Gulls** at Pt. Richmond 9-23 Jan (NB *et al.*) and at the aforementioned dump 23 Jan (SFB).

The roost of three **Long-eared Owls** remained at Ft. Cronkite 1-17 Jan (BF, JM). The Lake Merced **Tropical Kingbird** became so attached to one scrawny twig that it stayed another month (mob), while another appeared in Golden Gate Park 20 Jan (MO, KY). Straying away from normal haunts were a **Mountain Chickadee** and a **Mountain Bluebird** on Mt. Tamalpais 1 Jan (R&CH). A **Northern Shrike** returned for a second winter near Nicasio (WMP *et al.*). Among unusual winter warblers were a **Black-and-white** in Tilden Park 13 Jan (AB) and another at Inverness Park 18 Jan (DS *et al.*), two **Nashvilles** at Bodega Bay all month (RS *et al.*), single **Hermits** at Muir Beach 1 Jan (RS) and Muir Woods 30 Jan (DG), two **Palms** at Pacific Grove all month (RS, DbR) and another at Asilomar 8 Jan (RS), and **American Redstarts** at the Pajaro R. mouth 1 Jan (PM, DbR) and Forestville all month (LP, JM *et al.*), the latter an adult male returning for its second year. **Red Cross-bills** invaded southern Marin Co. in good numbers, spilling over into Golden Gate Park (mob). The wintering **Harris' Sparrow** continued to do just that in Palo Alto all month (JM *et al.*).

Observers: Stephen F. Bailey, Allen Bechky, Ned Boyajian, Ted Chandik, Mark Chapel, Howard Cogswell (HCg), Herold Connon (HC), Elizabeth and Robert Copper, Dick Erickson, Bud Fry, Dan Guthrie, Tom Heindel, Rick and Connie Hewitt, Jeri Langem (JLa), John Luther (JL), Susanne Luther, Eugene Makishima, Jack Mann (JMa), Guy McCaskie, Peter Metropoulos, Joe Morlan (JM), Mike Ozaki, Les Perry, William M. Pursell, William Reese, Debi Robinson, Phil Schaeffer, Dave Shuford, Rich Stallcup, Lawrence Stark, Nick Story, Keiko Yamane, many observers (mob).

—DON ROBERSON, *Observations Editor*
2244 Encinal Avenue #5
Alameda, California 94501 (865-2462)

Field Trips Calendar



Saturday & Sunday, March 5 & 6—Weekend trip to **Honey Lake** to see Sage Grouse. Details in *February Gull*. Leader: Mike Wihler (584-9245).

Sunday, March 6—**Sunol Regional Park**. Details in *February Gull*. Leader: Gene Hull (525-6893).

Wednesday, March 9—Mini-trip to **Lafayette Reservoir**. Meet at Claremont Hotel in Berkeley, at Ashby entrance parking lot, at **8:30 a.m.** to car pool from the East Bay. Lunch optional. Leader: Ruth Voss (525-8032).

Saturday, March 12—**Tennessee Cove**—a repeat of the January rain-out. Join us on a two-mile walk to explore this new GGNRA trail along riparian woodland, shore, and ocean for a great variety of birds. Take U.S. 101, exit at Cal. 1 toward Stinson Beach. About $\frac{1}{4}$ mile west of the freeway, turn left into Tennessee Valley Rd. Meet at end of road at **8:30 a.m.** Leader: Betty Short (921-3020, work).

Sunday, March 13—**Pescadero Marsh** and environs. A leisurely trip to have a close look at marsh and shorebirds. Good for beginners. Meet at **9:30 a.m.** in the large parking area just south of the intersection of Hwy. 1 and Pescadero Rd., about 40 miles south of San Francisco. Bring lunch. Leader: Candace Beach (323-6637, Palo Alto).

Saturday, March 19—**Panoche Valley**. We'll be looking for some interesting raptors, late winter birds, and early migrants. Meet at **8:00 a.m. sharp at Paicines**, at intersection of Hwys. 25 and J1 (12.5 miles south of Hollister, 2-plus hours' driving from Bay Area). Bring lunch and try to arrive with at least a half-full gas tank. Leader: Chris Carpenter (376-6802). This trip ends in the afternoon east of Paicines at Interstate 5, south of Los Banos. You may want to stay overnight in Los Banos and explore the Los Banos and San Luis wildlife refuges on Sunday (see *Sunset* magazine, February 1977, for directions to these birding areas).

Sunday, March 20—Alameda, for some of the best shore-birding in the Bay Area. We will explore several good spots around the inland, Meet at **9:00 a.m.** at Lincoln Park, High St. and Santa Clara Ave. (A.C. Transit O, 51, and 58). Leader: Leora Feehey (522-8525).

Wednesday, March 23—Mini-trip to Golden Gate Park from **10:00 a.m.** to noon. Meet at the kiosk at Strybing Arboretum, at Lincoln Way and Ninth Ave. Accessible by Muni buses 72 and 10. Leader: Roberta Long (564-7767).

Saturday, March 26—Lafayette Reservoir. Come out to share what *you* know with our leader—he is familiar with this delightful place and would like to learn more about the many birds there. Good trails, up to three miles walking. Lunch optional. Meet at **8:30 a.m.** at the east end of the large parking lot at the dam (fee \$1.00 per car) or park along Mt. Diablo Blvd. and walk up. From Hwy. 24 take Acalanes Rd.-Mt. Diablo Blvd. exit, follow Mt. Diablo Blvd. east 1.5 miles to reservoir. Leader: Howard Price (934-7135).

Sunday, March 27—Birding-by-ear for resident birds. Song Sparrow or Bewick's Wren? Titmouse or chickadee? If you really want to know, come at **7:30 a.m.** to the Mountain Theater parking lot, one mile off Panoramic Hwy. on the way to the top of Mt. Tamalpais. Bring snack to carry for brunch. Leader: Marie Mans (284-7681).

Saturday, April 2—Bothe-Napa Valley State Park. Pygmy Owls and Pileated Woodpeckers breed here. Meet in parking lot just inside park at **9:00 a.m.** Vehicle fee \$1.50 Entrance is on west side of Hwy. 29/129 a few miles north of St. Helena, just past the Bale Mill. Driving time about 1½ hours from Bay Area. Be prepared to walk 4-5 miles. Carpooling is recommended: call our transportation coordinator Kate Partridge at 849-1951 (home) or 642-3208 (8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.). Leaders: Pat Triggs (664-8502) and Gene Hull (525-6893).

Sunday, April 3—Bodega Bay at the peak of shorebird migration with a man who knows the Bay and the birds there as no one else does. Meet at **8:30 a.m.** at the parking lot next to the "76" station in Bodega Bay (across from the Tides restaurant). Bring lunch, scopes, and \$1.50 per car entrance fee for Doran County Park. Two hours driving time from Bay Area. Leader: Gordon Bolander.

There is room for a few more people on Mike Wihler's **Arizona trip** in May. Call GGAS office for more information.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas

Many factors such as climatic changes, natural evolution and degeneration of habitats, and alterations in land use affect changes in the breeding distribution of birds. Human activities are to an increasing extent a major force in altering natural habitats. It is important to have an accurate record of present-day distributions of birds, the most easily seen vertebrates which are quite sensitive to habitat changes, as a baseline for future comparison. Marin County, an important nature reserve and recreation ground adjacent to northern California's largest metropolitan area, was divided into 220 rectangles of about 625 hectares (253 acres) each; 53 persons covered 87 rectangles, finding evidence for 129 species including such uncommon birds as Yellow-rumped ("Audubon's") Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Sage Sparrow, and Golden Eagle. This year we need more people to help with this three-year project. If you are interested in bird watching, you may want to become involved in this worthwhile study.

Bob Stewart, PRBO biologist, will conduct the following instructional sessions in the field: Wednesdays, March 23 and 30, April 6, 13, 20, and 27, and May 4; or Thursdays, March 24 and 31, April 7, 14, 21, and 28, and May 5. All sessions will run 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. On Wednesdays meet at the corner of Sir Francis Drake Hwy. and Pierree Point Rd. near Tomales Bay State Park; on Thursdays meet at the Inverness Store parking lot in Inverness. The purpose of these field sessions is to stimulate interest in the Breeding Bird Atlas and at the same time improve birding skills with special emphasis on breeding behavior and song. If you are interested in the project but can't make these sessions, please join us for dinner at La Petite, behind Strawberry Shopping Center in Mill Valley, on Thursday, March 17 at 6:30 p.m. We will have an owl walk to Phoenix Lake afterwards. If you plan to come to any of these outings, please contact Bob at Point Reyes Bird Observatory, 4990 Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, California 94970.

Nature Study at Hudson Bay

University of California Extension offers a rare opportunity to bird in Arctic tundra at Hudson Bay in July: a 10-day field trip to Churchill, Canada to study birds with Ron LeValley, biologist at Point Reyes Bird Observatory, and botany and geology with Gladys Smith, botanist specializing in Arctic flora at UC. Living is comfortable, cost reasonable. For more information, call UC Extension in Berkeley, 642-6586.

Farallon Island Trips

On April 17 and 24 Golden Gate Audubon will sponsor boat trips to circle the Farallons for close looks at nesting seabirds (murre, guillemots, auklets, puffins, gulls) and other pelagic birds (shearwaters and perhaps albatrosses) and mammals.

The boats are scheduled to leave from Sausalito at 7:00 a.m. and return between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. Reservations may be made by mailing checks for \$16 per person along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Golden Gate Audubon Society, Boat Trip, 2718 Telegraph Ave. #206, Berkeley, Calif. 94705. Reservations are on a first come, first served basis and will close when the boats are filled. Details on where to meet will be sent with reservation confirmations.



Environmental Evenings at GGNRA

There are two more programs left in the Environmental Evening Series sponsored by the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. They are "The Values of the San Francisco Bay" by the Save San Francisco Bay Association on March 1, and "Polluted Aquatic Birds and How to Clean Them" by the Bird Rescue Center on March 15. Both programs begin at 7:30 p.m. in the GGNRA Visitor Center, Fort Mason, Bay and Franklin Streets, San Francisco.



Our Turn at The Ranch

Golden Gate Audubon has the opportunity and the responsibility for providing hosts at Audubon Canyon Ranch for Memorial Day weekend, May 28-30, all Saturdays and Sundays in June, and Independence Day weekend, July 2-4. We need at least four people each day.

Hosts are on duty from 9:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., which allows a bit of time before and after the ranch is open to the public. We try to team up new hosts with those who have had experience. It is a great experience and we have many repeaters. It is not too soon to pick your date. Call Vera at the office, 843-2222, or Dora Conrath at 346-1920.

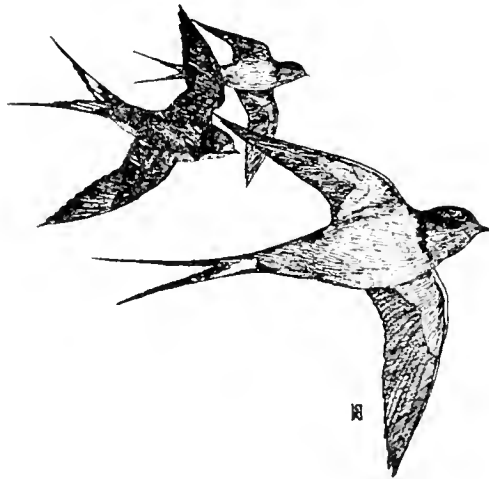
Environmental Studies at Merritt

A series of Saturday field trips with naturalist Paul Covel is being offered at Merritt College, March 12–May 14, 1977. The course will provide an introduction to ecological communities of the East Bay through classroom preparation and a series of field trips. The flora and fauna, with emphasis on birds, of six biomes will be studied. Included will be discussion of management and future preservation of the areas visited. Fee \$20, deadline for enrollment March 8. Inquire at Science/Math Division, Merritt College, 12500 Campus Drive, Oakland, California 94619.



Board Nominees Sought

A nominating committee has been appointed to choose a slate of candidates for election to the Board of Directors in June, and it would like to hear from members who are interested in becoming candidates or who have suggestions for nominees. Committee members are Chris Carpenter, Chairman, 1068 Sanders Drive, Moraga, California 94556 (phone 376-6802); Danne Jones, and Joe Morlan. Board nominations may also be made by petition; if you don't have a recent copy of the bylaws, call the office for information.



Gifts and Bequests

FOR GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY

GGAS has received a bequest from the estate of Charles Leighton.

General gift Betty P. and Edward C. Stucken, Jr.

In memory of:

Miriam Weiser Mary and Tom Wood

For Elsie Roemer's birthday John and Jane Dang

FOR AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

In honor of:

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FOR AUDUBON CANYON RANCH LIBRARY FUND

In memory of:

Violet G. Homem GGAS Board of Directors,
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Marjorie Gunn, Robert and Lenore Johnsen, Paul R. Mico, Edna
H. Niehaus, Estelle M. O'Brien, Elsie Roemer, Dr. Helen S. Ross,
Al and Lorraine Schnabel, T.I.F.O., Earl and Inez Troxell.

Memorial and honorary gifts and bequests will be used as specified by the donors. Acknowledgement will be made in *The Gull* and personally by the Corresponding Secretary, Shirley Taylor. Please send **checks made out to the Golden Gate Audubon Society** to: Corresponding Secretary, GGAS, 2718 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, California 94705. All gifts are tax deductible.



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THE GULL

March 1977

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA RARE BIRD ALERT (recorded) 843-2211

Rare Bird Alert compiler, Joe Morlan (654-1358)

Observations for THE GULL, Don Roberson (865-2462)

Office Manager, Vera Paraschak (843-2222)

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Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to the GGAS office.

Send address changes to office promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$15 per year (individual); \$18 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks (no cash) payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$3 per year; single issues 30¢. High school and college student membership \$8.50 per year. Senior citizen individual, \$12.00; senior citizen family, \$15.00.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon Society in 1948.

The Gull deadline is the first of the month for the following month.